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ABSTRACT

The proposed gifted and talented program for grades K-8 of the Kyrene School District (Tempe, Arizona) is described. It is explained that the program is based on a philosophy emphasizing human individual potentialities. The curriculum is said to be personalized, utilizing a seminar-resource center approach. Characteristics of exceptionally talented and gifted pupils are reviewed, and multidimensional screening procedures are suggested. Considered are additional program components, such as enrichment in the regular classes, a centralized resource center, and special counseling for students and their parents. Essential teacher characteristics are listed, as are myths and reality statements concerning talented and gifted students. (CL)

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We Are Each Like the Unicorn

Unique and Rare

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AN ESEA TITLE III PROJECT

Human Individual Potentialities

A PROGRAM FOR THE TALENTED AND GIFTED

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FOREWORD

Kyrene District #28 has been awarded a Title III Grant through the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, to develop an innovative program for the talented and gifted students identified in grades K - 8. The project is a three-year experimental program. Any plans spelled out at this early time in the project's development may be altered if the changes seem relevant and necessary. For two more years we will experiment, then pick and choose what seems the best program for the talented and gifted children in the Kyrene District. Meanwhile, this is the format we will attend to during a pilot study for 1975-76.

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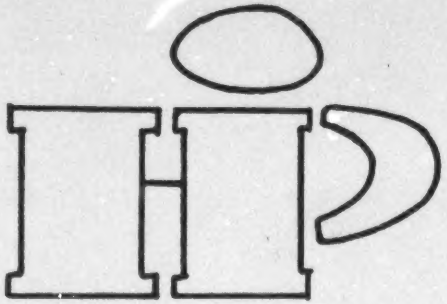
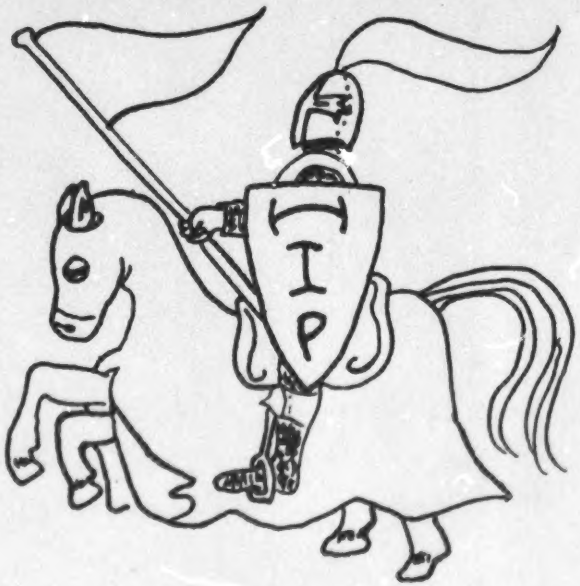
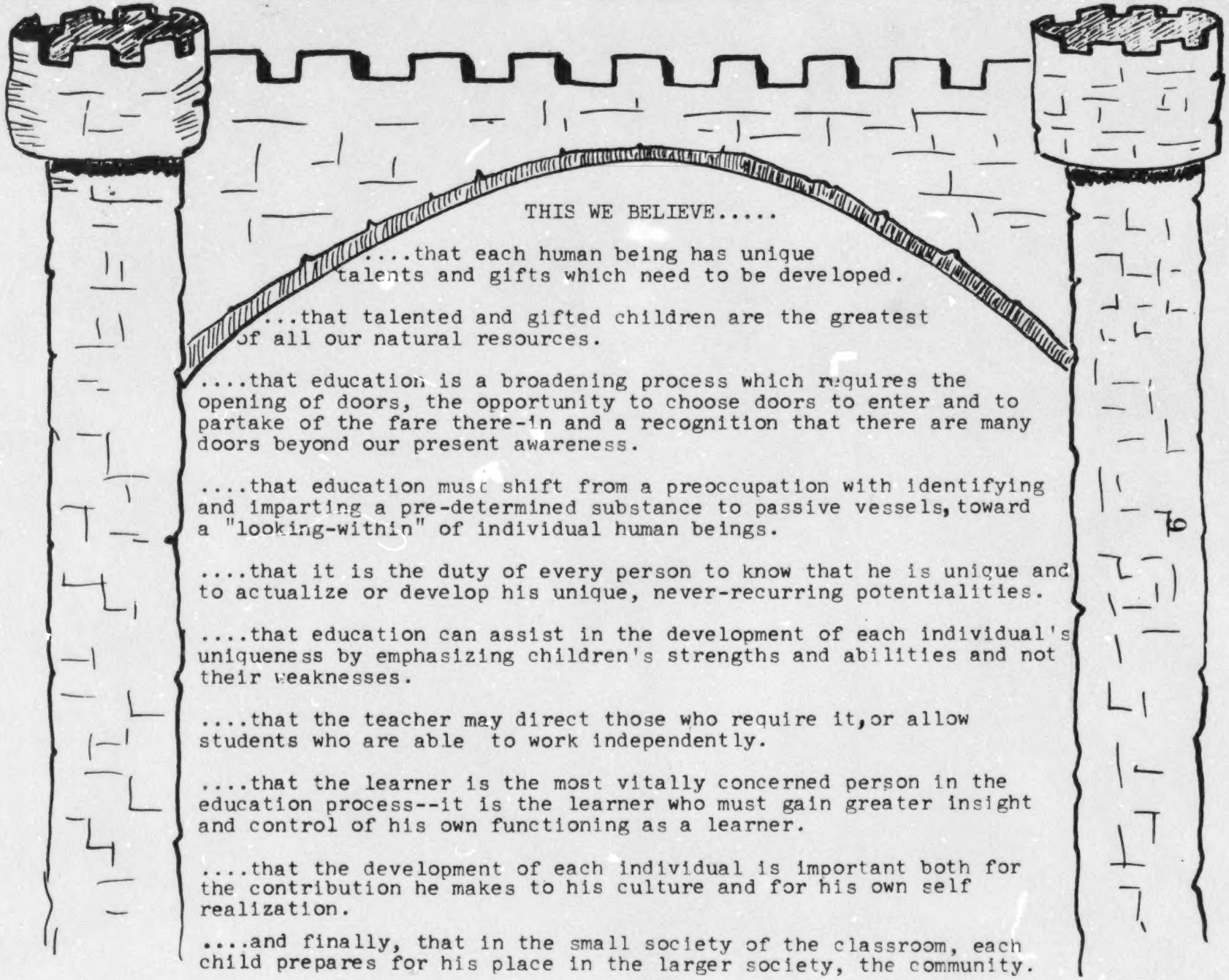


HUMAN INDIVIDUAL POTENTIALITIES



There are no rigid standards, no fixed norms, no definite categories among our young. Every human being is unique and constantly changing. Every child can be said to have potential talent of some degree and kind. The value of each individual to a democratic society lies precisely in his uniqueness, and in the extent to which he chooses to use, and is helped to use, his special talent, great or small, for the common good. It is the task of educators in a democracy to discover, release and foster in each individual those traits and abilities that make him unique, and to give him the desire to put them to work in his own special way for the good of all.

John Hersey
Intelligence, Choice and Consent



THIS WE BELIEVE.....

....that each human being has unique talents and gifts which need to be developed.

...that talented and gifted children are the greatest of all our natural resources.

....that education is a broadening process which requires the opening of doors, the opportunity to choose doors to enter and to partake of the fare there-in and a recognition that there are many doors beyond our present awareness.

....that education must shift from a preoccupation with identifying and imparting a pre-determined substance to passive vessels, toward a "looking-within" of individual human beings.

....that it is the duty of every person to know that he is unique and to actualize or develop his unique, never-recurring potentialities.

....that education can assist in the development of each individual's uniqueness by emphasizing children's strengths and abilities and not their weaknesses.

....that the teacher may direct those who require it, or allow students who are able to work independently.

....that the learner is the most vitally concerned person in the education process--it is the learner who must gain greater insight and control of his own functioning as a learner.

....that the development of each individual is important both for the contribution he makes to his culture and for his own self realization.

....and finally, that in the small society of the classroom, each child prepares for his place in the larger society, the community.

Philosophy

Human Individual Potentialities -- What It's All About

> "Good teaching is not solely the business of instructing; it is also the art of influencing another. Primarily, it is the job of uncovering and enlarging native gifts of insight, feeling and thinking.....a thousand talents await recognition!"
>
> Hugh Mearns
> Creative Power

The Human Individual Potentialities project is seeking to identify students in the Kyrene District who show "consistently remarkable performance in any worthwhile endeavor."

Pupils who excel in intellectual and academic pursuits will be identified and encouraged. They will be identified by use of traditional tests predicting intelligence quotients and academic grades.

But concern with individual potentialities is much more---areas not usually identified and encouraged in traditional educational settings are of great concern. They are areas of creative, kinesthetic and psycho-social giftedness, talent and interest. The abilities we are seeking then, either potential or demonstrated, are:

--general intellectual ability
--specific academic aptitude
--creative or productive thinking
--leadership ability
--ability in visual and performing arts
--psychomotor ability.

A student may not have a high I.Q. and still participate in this program--a child could presumably display an intelligence quotient of 85 and be a highly gifted artist--that child belongs in the Human Individual Potentialities program.

Students whose gifts and talents lie in the creative, kinesthetic or psychomotor areas are rarely identified or encouraged to develop those abilities in an educational system or in life. These children, as well as those identified as academically and intellectually gifted, must be encouraged, prodded, motivated to develop to the limits of their potentiality--and not be allowed to drift into meaningless obscurity and failure.

What Will The Approach Be?

Any program for the talented and gifted must take into account the special needs and types of talent and giftedness. Older concepts of giftedness were related to academic grades or assessment on intelligence quotient measures. The new trend incorporates many different kinds of concepts--besides academic, the talented, creative, psychosocial, and kinesthetic. A new emphasis has also developed which recognizes the talented and gifted in the context of their own culture. These many aspects of talent and giftedness must be recognized and attended to in any program.

Tentative Project Goals

--To identify students from Kindergarten through 8th grade in the Kyrene District who perform at a consistently high level in any worthwhile endeavor.

--To understand the abilities, interests, needs, strengths, weaknesses and modes of operation of each identified child.

--To provide a PERSONALIZED curriculum which will stimulate and enable each child to develop his potentialities to the fullest.

--To expose each student to a wider choice of intellectual and creative horizons through a program of required enrichment.

--To enable each gifted and talented student to gain a positive concept of self through recognition of areas of strengths and needed improvements to develop to fullest potentialities.

--To develop within each student a desire for excellence and a sense of individual responsibility to the school, community and changing society.

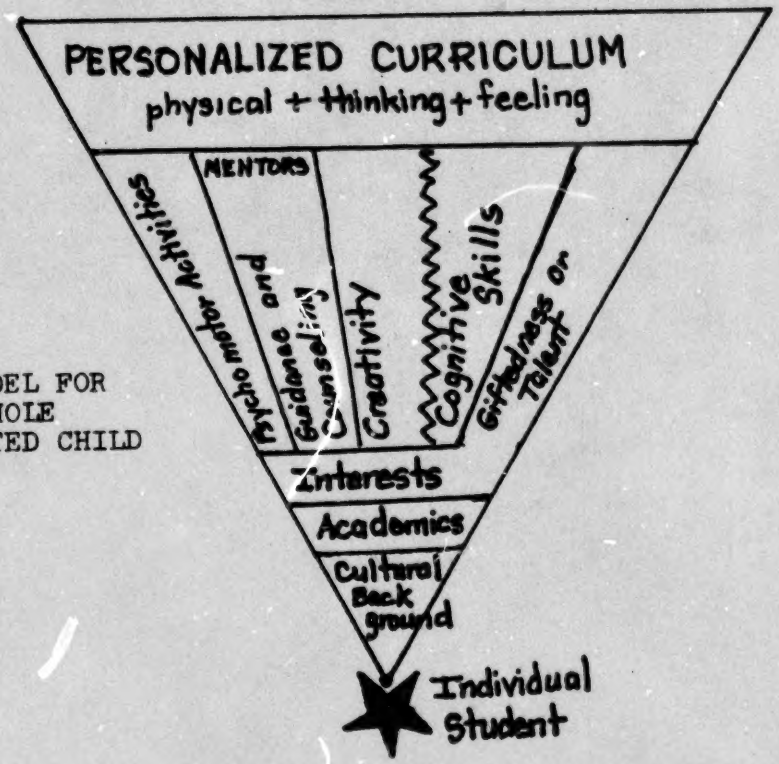
Curriculum

A Seminar Special Interest Center

The greatest challenge facing education today is to provide every child with the opportunity to develop his potentialities to the fullest. Our hope, then, is to develop a unique curriculum for each identified child that allows for his own learning, thinking and creativity abilities. The children at the upper end of the talented and gifted continuum cannot receive such PERSONALIZED learning in a regular classroom. To expose them to a special educational program they will be withdrawn from the regular classroom for 2½-hour periods of work in a Special Interest Center. During the 2½-hour seminar the student will operate as a self-motivated learner and the teacher as a guide and helper.

A Personalized Curriculum

For each identified talented or gifted child a curriculum relevant to his or her own specific needs will be developed.

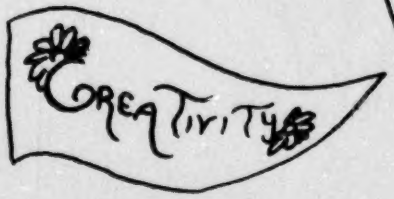


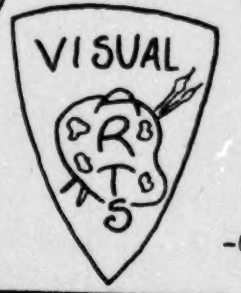
A CURRICULUM MODEL FOR EDUCATING THE WHOLE TALENTED OR GIFTED CHILD

In designing a program for the talented and gifted we intend to develop a unique PERSONALIZED CURRICULUM for each participating student. The program will consider:

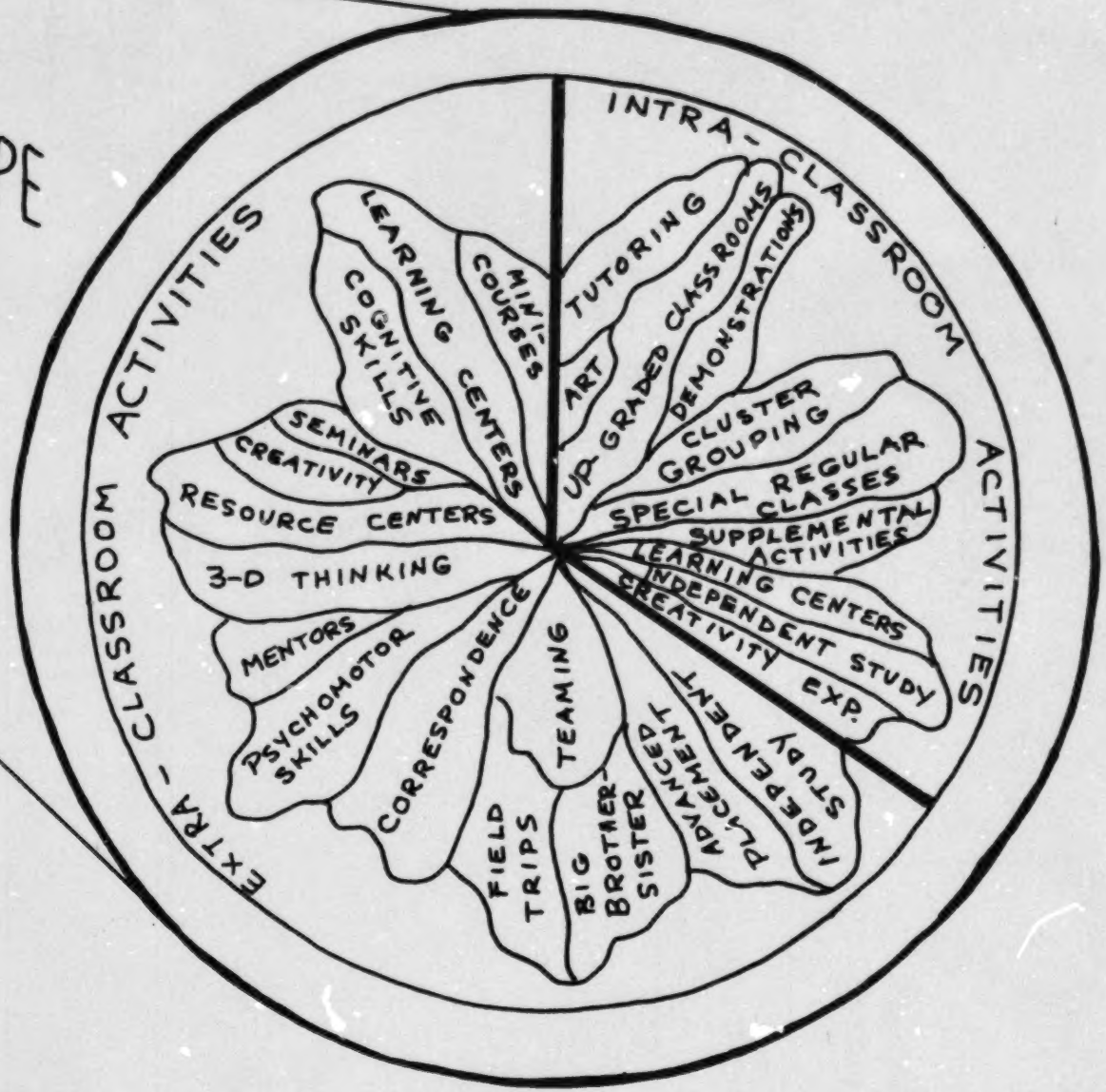
- --cultural background
- --academic level of achievement
- --individual interests
- --individual orientation and modes of thinking
- --individual giftedness and talent
- --concept of the self and others
- --career education
- --psychomotor development
- --open or traditional functioning needs

Structured experiences in creativity, high level cognitive skills, self-actualization and human relationships will be incorporated in the program.





KALEIDOSCOPE OF ACTIVITIES



Additional Activities

A veritable kaleidoscope of alternative learning experiences will be incorporated in the program for the gifted and talented.

Purposes of Activities

The basic premise for including such a variety of activities in the Human Individual Potentialities Program is that it will:

--assure an opportunity for creative pursuits
--encourage respect for high standards while participating
--provide an opportunity for leadership roles
--facilitate projects that further special aptitudes and interests
--assure student and parent enrichment and responsibility for the class
--make available materials for basic research
--provide different student instructional modes.

Student Involvement

Student involvement in various activities will:

--provide for individual and small group projects
--extend experiences in the arts
--provide day and extended field trips
--encourage pre-planning and self-evaluation
--enable participation in community and local college specialists workshops
--present participants with problem-solving activities in the areas of human values
--provide career education choice experiences
--provide cross-age tutoring and student learning centers
--provide use of special multi-media learning kits, materials and equipment
--provide inter- and intradistrict talent exchange.

Program Qualifications

Characteristics of the Exceptionally Talented and Gifted

Intensive screening of the Kyrene students for the highly talented and gifted is now occuring. Such screening will continue as an on-going process, for a child who does not display an exceptionally high degree of giftedness or talent one year may do so the next. Likewise, a child who is identified one year but seems to be unable to "get it all together" another year will receive special teaching and/or help from a coordinating counselor.

Hopefully, screening of Kyrene's children can begin before they enter kindergarten, enabling identification of each child's strengths and needs so that an exact PERSONAL CURRICULUM can be prescribed for them.

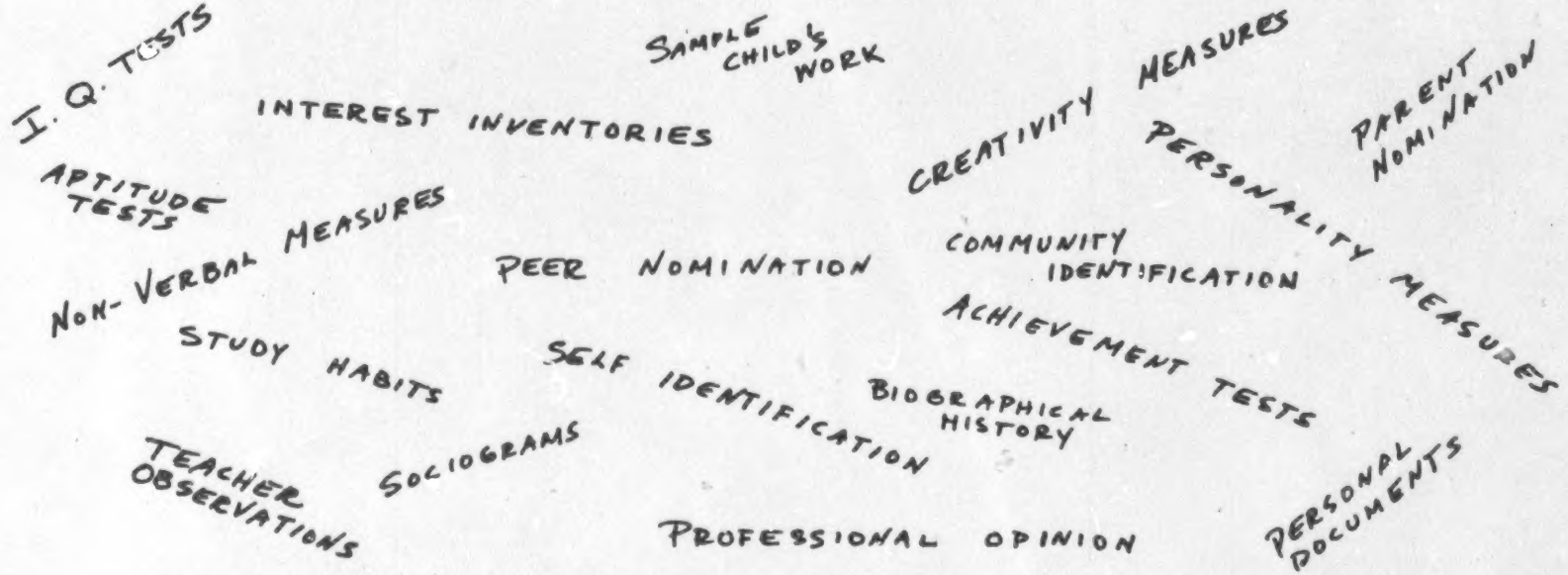
Teachers, therapists, counselors and administrators will be constantly vigilant, SEARCHING FOR UNIDENTIFIED EXCEPTIONALLY TALENTED AND GIFTED STUDENTS.

Some of the characteristics of highly talented and gifted, by which they may be recognized are:

...HIGH ENERGY..... ALERTNESS, EAGERNESS, LEARNS EASILY AND RAPIDLY..... ADVANCED ABILITY AND INTEREST IN READING, LARGE VOCABULARY... VERBAL PROFICIENCY, UNIVERSAL POWER OF OBSERVATION.... INTELLECTUAL CURIOSITY, RETENTIVENESS, WIDE FUND OF KNOWLEDGE... SENSE OF HUMOR ...EXCEPTIONAL POWERS OF CONCENTRATION..... CREATIVE OR UNUSUAL IDEAS, ABSTRACT COMPREHENSION .... SELF-DIRECTION .... INDEPENDENCE ... OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN SCHOOL WORK OR STANDARDIZED TESTS ... SOCIAL LEADERSHIP ABILITY... UNIQUE PHYSICAL SKILLS

Ways to Identify Talented and Gifted

Multi-dimensional screening of all Kyrene students will take place during the Spring of 1975 and Fall of 1976. Some of the measuring devices used will be:



After testing, parents will be informed of the results and identified children who so desire will participate in the Human Individual Potentialities Program. Each student's placement will be recommended by a screening committee composed of the child's teacher, the principal, the coordinating counselor and the HIP Coordinator.

The screening committee will review all case history data, giving special consideration to emotional maturity and social adjustment. At meetings with the parents, an explanation of the program, recommendations for at-home help, recommendations for the child's placement and a request for parent participation in an on-going parent discussion group will be made.

Additional Concepts

Enrichment In The Regular Classes

During regular classroom time the talented and gifted may participate using supplementary materials in the form of mini-units, learning centers, advanced materials, team learning, additional subjects or independent study. They will receive special help from parent aides and HIP resource personnel. The classroom teacher will also be supplied with particular materials by the HIP resource personnel.

Resource Centers

The Resource Centers at each school will be open and available before and after school as well as during noon for all interested Kyrene School students. During school hours only identified talented and gifted will report for seminars or independent work at the centers. In addition, any identified student may report to the Resource Center at the discretion of the Resource Center Teacher when regular classroom work is completed throughout the day.

The Resource Center will schedule two sessions per day, lasting for two and a half hours each, with selection of activities based on student's individual interests and needs. Staff members will be available to consult with teachers or conference with the Coordinating Counselor concerning individual problems.

Curriculum Center

A curriculum center for the talented and gifted program will be placed in a central location. Materials and prepared units for all teachers will be available. In addition to receiving mini-units and learning center materials, teachers will be able to make any necessary objects, cages, audio-visual materials. Patterns and materials will be supplied by the curriculum center. Each teacher may walk in, put together the materials and walk out with the completed project. Those materials designed especially for the Resource Centers will not be available for the regular classroom.

Special Counseling, Instruction or Seminars

Both identified students in the talented and gifted program and their parents will receive much counseling and instruction from Coordinating Counselor. The Coordinating Counselor will conduct remedial and enrichment instruction for the talented and gifted as well as guidance activities for individuals, small groups, and teachers of the gifted.

Clustering In Regular Classrooms

Cluster grouping meets various needs of the talented and gifted. Materials for mini-units and learning centers will be available for small groups in the regular classroom. A small cluster of identified talented and gifted can be a stimulating addition to a regular classroom where they may be placed. It is expected, however, that as in the normal exchange of daily living, they will receive from their experience with others as much as they may give.

Identified talented and gifted may help by teaming, tutoring and teaching mini-lessons in the regular classroom milieu.

Underachieving Gifted and Talented

Of great concern to HIP personnel are children with identified high potential ability who have learning difficulties which keep them from achieving at their measured ability level. Special classroom techniques will be offered these children who are not achieving at or above grade level or exhibit debilitating social emotional disabilities. Of great concern for all talented and gifted children is the development of a positive concept of themselves.

The basic concern of this classroom program will be to reduce the gap between the child's potential and actual level of achievement. And to:

--develop proper behavioral responses to the social and academic experiences which previously illicited feelings of failure and alienation
--become motivated toward self-fulfillment of academic potential
--develop a positive self-concept.

Any other grouping or teaching arrangements which seem relevant and appropriate may be initiated at any time in this newly developing program.

Selection of Teachers

Teachers of the talented and gifted must possess a wide range of abilities and skills themselves. Picking teachers for such a program is a difficult task. Characteristics of such teachers should include the following:

--Those who have vitality, energy, stimulating personalities, strong intellectual and cultural backgrounds, and are rigorous in their demands for learning.
--Those who like to come early to school and often work through the lunch hour: creative, intraceptive people with minds of their own.
--Those who have close contacts with books and libraries, equipment and laboratories.
--Those who give evidence of professional eminence, who carry on educational activities outside of school, such as speaking or writing.
--Those whose rooms could be better described as "stimulating" than as "neat."
--Those who tend to volunteer for work with the gifted or talented and have been members of study committees or who have had special training.
--Those who have original ideas and like to try out something new.

Highly intelligent children have indicated that teachers who work with them should have:

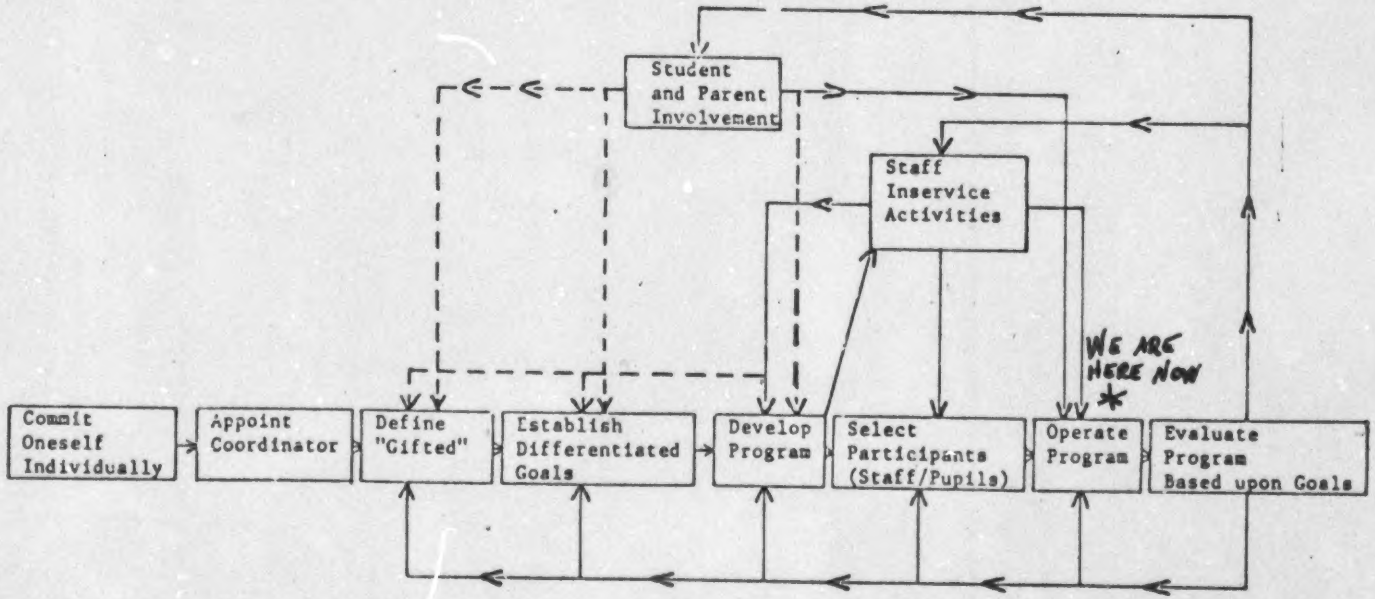
--a sense of humor
--flexibility
--patience and warmth
--consistent behavior
--personal magnetism
--cooperative and democratic attitudes
--sensitivity to others
--curiosity and desire for additional knowledge
--wide interests
--knowledge in several fields
--little threat from ability of students
--capacity to say, "I don't know"
--willingness to work as hard or harder than their gifted and talented students.

Where We Are Going

A RECOMMENDED PROCESS FOR SETTING UP PROGRAMS FOR THE TALENTED AND THE GIFTED

Irving S. Sato, Director, National/State Leadership Training
Institute on the Gifted and the Talented

The progress chart below indicates the gradual steps for organizing a program for the talented and gifted. Because the Kyrene District has been awarded an ESEA Title III grant, additional priorities have been incorporated into the organizing process. The first year of the program, 1974-75, was a research and planning year. The second year, 1975-76, curriculum is being developed for K - 4 and a pilot research class for talented and gifted is participating. During 1976-77, a pilot program for talented and gifted in grades 5 - 8 will occur and curriculum for those age levels will be developed concurrently. By Spring of 1977 the Human Individualities Program will be operating K - 8 in the Kyrene District.



Myths About Gifted & Talented

Erroneous myths about the talented and gifted have developed over the years. Despite these myths, which imply that all is well for the gifted and talented, some four million children in this country who are either talented or gifted have been grossly neglected. Some of the major myths related to the education of the talented and gifted are:

Myths

1. Identified gifted and talented students need no special help--they are smart enough to make it on their own.

2. All gifted and talented students make good grades and are successful in school.

3. All gifted and talented students are popular with their peers.

4. Gifted and talented students represent an upper middle class elite.

Reality

1. Great talent can paradoxically be a handicap in an educational situation designed (as most schools are) for the average youngster. Gifted and talented often hide their talents in an effort to gain acceptance--they often feel different, strange, unaccepted.

2. 12% of the gifted and talented have reading disabilities--15% of identified gifted drop out of high school.

3. Gifted and talented students' ability to conceptualize at higher levels, or do things differently than others, often frightens their peers and drives them away.

4. Giftedness and talent comes from all cultural, educational and socio-economic levels.

MYTHS	REALITY
5. Educators are aware of the needs of gifted and talented students.	5. Some 57% of all U. S. school administrators surveyed stated they had no gifted and talented in their classrooms.--Report to Congress, 1973, Vol. 1 & 2.
6. Teachers can easily take care of the gifted and talented in their regular classrooms.	6. Teachers cannot meet the needs of children who need different kinds of educational materials than that presented in regular classrooms. In fact, gifted and talented children are often a threat to teachers and are treated with hostility.
7. Special teachers are being adequately trained for the gifted and talented.	7. Only 12 universities in the U. S. have graduate programs in gifted and talented education.
8. State education departments recognize the neglect of the talented and gifted children in our society and are eager to amend the situation.	8. Only ten State Departments of Education in the U. S. have a full-time person hired for the gifted and talented, yet 75% of the effective programs are concentrated in those states.

THE GIFT

I had a gift but no one ever told me--
I would have thought of ribbons if they did--
Binets the teacher gave us must have shown me
brighter than some, an overaverage kid--
skipped half a grade, then skipped half another
and seemed to be shrinking smaller and smaller and smaller.
"Everyone's older," I cried to my busy mother
and she said, "Eat your spinach and you'll get taller."
I didn't, however--not in junior high--
where boys began to boom and girls grew curves--
having a gift in those days could be lonely
without the help such difference deserves,
and there I was in high school, still behind
my ungifted class in everything but mind.

--Harold Witt

Commissioned by the California Association for the
Gifted for the Thirteenth Annual CAG Conference,
San Francisco, 1975